(b) Three hundred twenty local electronic telephone exchanges (main/expansion) are proposed to be opened from 1-1-87 to 31.3.90 subject to availability of resources.

(c) Following are the criteria for setting up local electronic telephone exchanges:—

(i) Medium and large sized electronic local telephone exchanges:

(1) Metro Telephone Systems

(2) Major Telephone Systems

(3) Places where digital trunk automatic exchanges are justified and getting installed.

(4) Heavy telephone growth areas where large telephone demands to the extent of 5000 lines and above are to be met.

(5) Places where the existing medium sized containerised electronic exchanges are to be replaced by large sized digital electronic exchanges.

(ii) Rural Automatic Exchanges:

(1) Criterion for setting up 9 line exchanges is subject to demand of 5 and anticipated revenue is 35 percent of annual recurring expenditure.

(2) Higher sizes are set up at district headquarters and other important places *vis.* Industrial places, Growth Centres etc.

Collaboration with an Italian firm for manufacturing of microwave system

2520. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enter into collaboration with an Italian firm for the manufacture of microwave system in the country and for the purchase of 13 GH2 microwave system, costing about Rs. 80 crore, even though some other internationally reputed firms have quoted much less amount for the project;

(b) if so, what is the comparative cost offered by the other foreign firms for the project; and

(c) what are the considerations which weighed with Government to decide in favour of Italian firm?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) There is no proposal to enter into collaboration with any Italian firm for manufacture of microwave system in the country. The tenders for purchase of microwave equipment have not yet been finalised.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Education to poor children

2521 SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly four crore children in the country are unable to receive proper education due to poor economic condition;

(b) whether Government are taking any steps for providing some sort of education to them in the near future; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) it is a fact that a fairly large number of children in the age gorup 6—14 is not able to receive education of appropriate quality. Out of 14.54 crores of children in the age group 6—14 in 1985, 11.39 crores were enrolled in 1984-85. Thus, there is a sizeable number of children who did not get enrolled to begin with or dropped-out later.